Democracy — The One "Option" We Shy Away From in Vietnam, P. 3

The General Who First Launched the Idea of MLF Now Predicts Its Rejection by NATO

"Los Angeles, Nov. 21 — Gen. Lauris Norstad, former commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, said yesterday the U.S. proposal for a multilateral nuclear force 'has succeeded in dividing rather than unifying the member nations of NATO.' Norstad told a news conference he doubts NATO nations will ever adopt the proposal. 'It doesn't appear that any agreement is imminent, and an impassioned speech at a conference table won't alter things,' he said. 'Gen. de Gaulle will not agree now, later or ever,' Norstad continued. 'The plan has not been accepted by Britain either, and Germany agreed only under pressure'." —*Associated Press in Washington Post, Nov. 22.*

I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. XII, NO. 40 NOVEMBER 30, 1964 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

J. Edgar Hoover's Novel View of Racism

J. Edgar Hoover turned up at Gwen Cafritz's party here in Washington the other evening and found, according to the *Washington Star's* society reporter (Nov. 21) that he couldn't get past the entrance "as he drew group after group of guests expressing admiration for his outspoken comments during an unusual three-hour press conference with women reporters earlier this week." The spontaneous ovation showed that beneath the cynical surface of Washington society there beats a warm heart, ready to welcome the dissenter even in this age of conformity. Mr. Hoover told the admirers thronging around him that he was surprised at the reaction from the country. He said he had received almost 400 telegrams, "all favorable except for two or three who were critical or hostile" and these he said "were probably from racist groups associated with Martin Luther King."

Not Even Bull Connor or Ross Barnett

We have often asked why Mr. Hoover did not speak out on the subject of racism. We are encouraged to see that he has at last broached the subject, though from a novel angle. We had never thought of Rev. King or the organizations associated with him as racist, though we suppose that in a sense they are. Mr. Hoover obviously considers as racist any organization which seeks to give the Negro equality with the white man, to set race against race by insisting that Southern registrars register Negro voters, too, and generally to stir up the Negro against white supremacy. This has, come to think of it, long been the South's point of view but no Southern spokesman has had the daring to express it in quite so original a way. It never occurred to Bull Connor to assert that he had set the dogs on those demonstrators in Birmingham to protect the city from racism. Nor has Ross Barnett thought of defending the burning of Negro churches in Mississippi as a means of safeguarding the State from racist agitation. To call Martin Luther King "the most notorious liar in the country" may have seemed a little extreme even to members of the White Citizens' Councils. But to come up with the idea that NAACP, CORE, SNCC and Southern Christian Leadership Conference can be termed "racist" organizations—that's close akin to genius.

This observation by Mr. Hoover shows the wisdom of his attitude toward press conferences. Though Mr. Hoover is constantly writing articles on various favorite menaces (usually red or pink) in the Sunday supplements, his usual practice on interviews is to answer prepared written questions submitted in advance. The lucky reporter gets the answers in written form and a handshake. In 40 years as head of the FBI, Mr. Hoover had never before held a general press conference, and even this first of its kind was restricted to women. According to *The Washington Post's* society reporter, Marie McNair (Nov. 21) Mr. Hoover explained this at the Cafritz party. "With men journalists," he told his admirers, "the questions are loaded and the reporters are trying to trip you up. However, there are exceptions to this, he declared, naming half a dozen newspapers throughout the country in which he has confidence." It is reassuring to learn that Mr. Hoover does not regard the entire American press with suspicion, and is prepared to grant clearance to six newspapers at least. It is easy to imagine what the run-of-the-mill subversive Washington correspondent (male) would have done at a press conference in which Mr. Hoover implied that Martin Luther King was a racist. Some slippery fellow might even have asked Mr. Hoover blandly whether he was perhaps thinking of arresting the Rev. King under the new Civil Rights Act.

Three Leading Papers on J. Edgar

"The extensiveness of his list of hates and the intemperance of many of his utterances speak poorly for the clarity of his judgment. . . . It would be wise to let the mandatory provisions of the Federal retirement law take effect on Mr. Hoover's 70th birthday."
—*New York Times, Nov. 20.*

"Mr. J. Edgar Hoover hasn't been in the habit of holding news conferences, and his performance Wednesday suggests it may have been just as well for his reputation. He managed . . . to state as fact that 'no one' dares to walk in New York's Central Park 'even in the daytime'—a purported fact which would no doubt surprise the thousands of New Yorkers who use the park daily. . . . For the holder of one of the most sensitive posts in the government, the FBI director showed a cavalier recklessness with fact and fancy."
—*New York Herald-Tribune, Nov. 20.*

"Unaccustomed as he is to public criticism, J. Edgar Hoover customarily responds to its occasional expression by impugning the integrity, virtue or patriotism of his critics. . . . This kind of talk, if it came from any other bureau chief in the Federal Government, would be generally recognized as insufferable effrontery on the part of a public servant."
—*Washington Post, Nov. 21.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Liberal Democrats More Timorous About Public Control Than England's Tories

Britain Far to The Left of U.S. on The Crucial Question of Steel

Britain is on the verge of nationalizing its private steel monopoly for the second time in little more than a decade. We have not begun to regulate ours. In comparison with our retarded politics even the British Conservatives look like left-wing radicals. As long ago as 1951 they renounced the idea of a free market in steel. They established a regulatory commission, the Iron and Steel Board, with authority to set maximum prices and supervise major investments. That's a good bit further than many of our liberal Democrats would be prepared to go even now. The steel debate in the House of Commons November 9 showed that the Conservatives have moved still further left. The main question for many was no longer whether to nationalize steel but by how much.

The London *Economist* framed the question similarly last May when it came out with reservations for "[public] ownership or control of part of the industry." Even the steel industry is not pressing for a return to unregulated competition. Its Iron and Steel Federation wrote recently that "in such a key industry as steel, the public has a right to know whether the activities of the companies accord with the public interest, and to ensure that they do." Our steel companies won't even let Congress see their costs of production. When Kefauver's Antitrust Committee tried to subpoena the figures in 1962, the companies simply refused.

Barrier To Full Employment

The need for some form of government control over steel is as great here as in Britain. There the main economic problem is a trade gap; here it is an employment gap. Solutions to both are linked with the price of steel since it is our most important industrial material. The high price of steel since the war has contributed to reduced demand and increased unemployment throughout the economy. Prof. Otto Eckstein, now on the Council of Economic Advisers and no great economic radical, told the Kefauver committee in 1959 that at least 50% of the wholesale price inflation in the 1950's was due to the steel companies raising prices when they should have been lowering them. The committee calculated that a price raise in 1957 had added $540 million to the cost of steel products and this was just one of three price increases within a year. Although Congress has investigated steel prices in no less than seven out of the last fifteen years, so far no member has been bold enough to offer a legislative remedy.

Steel pricing is too important to be left to the vagaries of presidential politics. Kennedy blocked an across-the-board price rise in 1962 but then permitted piecemeal increases on the sly. The logical place to tackle this problem is within the context of Sen. Clark's Planning-For-Full-Employment Bill. The original Full Employment Bill of 1945, before it was emasculated, authorized the regulation of monopoly prices. Sen. Clark should go at least as far in his bill. It would be gentle treatment for his steel mogul constituents in Pennsylvania when compared with the position taken by Britain's Conservative Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in his book, "The Middle Way". "The Socialist remedy should be accepted," he wrote, "where the general welfare of the economy requires that certain basic industries and services need now to be conducted in the light of broader social considerations than the profit motive."

Germany's Foremost Physicist Against MLF

"The relationship of the MLF to Germany and the German question is a painful problem for international politics. The Federal Republic is the only European country that gives the impression of really wanting the MLF. To the foreign observer there must appear a good reason for this. . . . The MLF seems to be the only way for the Federal Republic to come close to control over nuclear weapons. At the same time the Federal Republic is the only country in Central Europe that publicly raises territorial claims. The Federal Republic gives assurances in full sincerity that it will seek to achieve those aims peacefully. It is not in our power to eliminate mistrust in our sincerity. In these circumstances, the entire world, including even the West, must react nervously to Germany's approaching the status of a thermonuclear power."

—C. F. von Weizsäcker, the Reich's leading nuclear physicist in Die Zeit (Hamburg) Nov. 20.

Erich Fromm Believes U.S. Drive for MLF Played Part in Khrushchev's Downfall

"Khrushchev's fall has been explained as a result of his permitting the rift with China to become unbridgeable. The fact, however, which is hardly mentioned in the press, is that Khrushchev's failure can be understood only if we consider his total political strategy and our part in contributing to his failure. His aim was accommodation with the United States, thus securing his Western flank while facing a hostile China. . . . Khrushchev was afraid of the spread of nuclear weapons, especially among his two most dangerous opponents—China and West Germany. There are good reasons to assume that his concept of an accommodation with the United States included the aim to prevent (perhaps through the UN) the Chinese and West Germans from obtaining nuclear weapons. . . .

"Khrushchev did his best to achieve this aim. He stopped technical aid for the Chinese nuclear development. He made the important concessions to the United States of dropping his plan for a peace treaty with East Germany and political neutralization of East Berlin. . . .

"But when we had gotten this concession we went ahead to threaten him in a more vital area: the multilateral force which is likely to give West Germany a de facto possession of nuclear weapons, a Germany which has not relinquished its claims to the pre-war boundaries in the east. Thus Khrushchev's policy has led to a situation where the Soviet Union is threatened on both flanks—a political failure which would remove any leading statesman from his position in any country. . . .

"If the United States goes on with its plans for the MLF, the new leaders will be forced to seek an accommodation with China, and to follow an aggressive policy, or they will be replaced by a still tougher group. The next months may offer an opportunity of avoiding this by not going ahead with the MLF. Khrushchev's fall should be a lesson showing where further 'victories' in the cold war will lead."

—Erich Fromm, author of "May Man Prevail", in a letter to the Wash. Post, Nov. 19.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Could We Find A More Honorable Way Out Than to Give The Vietnamese Free Choice?

Gen. Taylor and His Chief Aides Make Some Revealing Admissions in Saigon

On the eve of Gen. Maxwell Taylor's return from Saigon and possible new decisions on Vietnam, much can be learned from a close and careful reading of the interview *Life* published Nov. 27 with him and the other heads of U.S. mission in that country. A good place to begin is with an admission by Deputy Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson. "This country," he said, "has never had any experience at government. During the whole period of their colonial administration, no independent political activity was permitted. This was also true, from 1954 to 1963, during the Diem period." This admits that our domination like the French was undemocratic. The "freedom" we claimed to be protecting was cold war rhetoric, not the reality of self-government.

Where We Look Totalitarian

To the peasants, Barry Zorthian of USIA admitted, the totalitarian side seemed to be ours, not the Vietcong's. When he was asked about the motivation on the Vietcong side, Zorthian replied that "only a small portion" were "hard-core Communist", that "many went over to the other side because of the Diem government, because of their reaction to what they felt were totalitarian methods under the Diem government. They have not perhaps been persuaded sufficiently to come back as yet. . . ." Perhaps a real offer of freedom would persuade them to "come back."

In the urban areas, Zorthian went on, "the appeal of a democratic form of government is a very strong one" and "part of the political unrest" is due to the fact that for the first time "educated Vietnamese" have a chance to "express themselves politically." He did not add that from all account what they are trying to express is their dissatisfaction with a civilian government of dodoes hand-picked by the military and completely under their thumb. It is a fraud, which only sharpens desire for the real thing.

If the Communist hard core of the Vietcong is small, if the desire for free government is widespread, why don't we try giving South Vietnam the freedom for which we claim to be fighting? If the majority want self-government, isn't the satisfaction of that desire the one way to win the majority from hard-core Communist leadership and to establish a stable regime? These questions were not put by *Life*. But they are there, between the lines. This is the one "option" we do not discuss. The "options" we prefer to talk about are forms of widening the war.

When Gen. Taylor was asked about these military "options" he gave the answer of an honest and troubled man. "These possibilities do exist," he said, "but they have their pros and cons. *I would add again that military action outside the country, just as pure military action inside the country, will not win.* (Our italics). We must restore a viable society within these provinces of South Vietnam." The real "crunch" is that a viable society means a democratic society and a democratic society will vote for peace and possibly a coalition government of national reconciliation. This is why we fear a democratic solution, and talk of bombing Hanoi instead. But isn't it worth the risk? Why not demonstrate our sincerity about self-government, challenge the other side to internationally supervised elections, and allow the Vietnamese a free choice? Could we find a more honorable way out?

Bulletin Board

To Norman Thomas, homage on his 80th birthday: The main-stream of American life would have been a lot more stagnant but for his influence. We hope he is with us for many more years to come, an inspiration by his sense of humor, his magnanimity and his never flagging concern for human suffering everywhere . . . To readers: Many thanks for the flood of cards and notes on our recent ear operation, which forced us unfortunately to skip an issue. . . . To indignant Californians: Our election editorial had to be written before returns from their state later showed the shameful victory of racism in their housing referendum.

Screening Communist Mail Propaganda from Abroad Held Contrary to First Amendment

"The Postmaster General and the Customs Bureau maintain 11 screening posts in the U.S. for the interception of 'communist political propaganda.' . . . The addressee is mailed POD Form 2153-X identifying the mail and advising him that it will be destroyed unless he signifies a desire to receive it. . . . In the instant case plaintiff . . . refused to sign the card and instead filed this suit. Thereafter the General Counsel of the Post Office notified plaintiff that the filing of this suit constituted an expression of a desire to receive [all such] mail. . . . In short, contrary to plaintiff's wishes, his name was placed on a list of people desiring to receive 'communist political propaganda.'

"Initially, defendants argue that this suit has been rendered moot by the aforementioned action of the General Counsel. . . . This same defense was raised, successfully, in Lamont v. Postmaster General, 229 F. Supp. 913 (1964). We cannot agree with that distinguished court. . . . To render this case moot . . . is to approve a device which would enable defendants to prevent any potential recipient of mail originating abroad from ever testing constitutionality. . . . Furthermore, we think contrary to the court in Lamont that plaintiff may also assert the rights of third parties. . . . Persons interested in receiving political matter from abroad may be deterred from bringing suit . . . lest this be construed as expression of a desire to receive 'communist political propaganda.' The social stigma and economic injury they may suffer is very real. We do not think a person should be made to suffer social disapprobation in order to assert his constitutional rights. . . .

"Similar lists under earlier non-statutory screening programs were routinely turned over to the House Committee on Un-American Activities. . . . Assurances by defendant that these practices have been discontinued cannot be reasonably expected to mitigate a person's reluctance to have his name associated with 'communist political propaganda.' There are no similar assurances that this information will not be made available in the future in view of the lack of a statutory requirement that [this] information . . . remain confidential. . . .

"The purpose of the new legislation was primarily to control, restrict and prevent the delivery of matter found to be communist propaganda, an infringement upon the dissemination of ideas and therefore a clear and direct invasion of First Amendment territory. . . . We are compelled to declare the statute unconstitutional on its face."

—Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, Nov. 17.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Endless Debates on Liturgy But The Question of Nuclear Weapons Shelved in 48 Hours

The Ecumenical Council as the "20th Congress" of Roman Catholicism

The Ecumenical Council, which has just closed its third session in Rome, is in a sense the "20th Congress" of Roman Catholicism. Khrushchev, who opened the windows at the 20th Congress and let in a little fresh air on the stagnant atmosphere of Stalinism, resembled in some ways Pope John XXIII, who within three months of ascending the throne of St. Peter, decided to call the first Ecumenical Council since 1870, and bring the Church "up to date." Both were men of the people, almost peasant types, with a sense of humor and good sense often absent in their bureaucracies.

We deal here with two dogmatic world systems, which owe their ultimate origin to the Jewish passion for social justice (one in Jesus, the other in Marx). Both have congealed into vast power structures, claiming infallibility through revelation. Both have the intrinsic intolerance of systems claiming to possess the one and only truth. Both are having slowly to adjust to man's instinctive desire for intellectual freedom.

A Sharp Contrast With Its Predecessor

Compared to the last Council in 1870 and to Pius XI who presided over it, the new Council shows a fresh wind blowing through the ancient structure. Pius XI, in his reign of 32 years, set himself like a Canute against all the tides of modernity. The achievement of his Council was an exercise in anachronism, the promulgation of Papal Infallibility. The sharpest contrast is on religious liberty, which Pius XI attacked along with all other forms of liberalism in his notorious *Syllabus of Errors*. In this Council only a last-minute maneuver by the Roman Curia, abetted by Pope Paul, who is no liberal, blocked a majority declaration for religious liberty. That, and a new majority declaration clearing the Jews of guilt for the Crucifixion, seem certain of adoption at the next session. The latter will help shut off a poisonous source of anti-Semitism.

Compared with the needs of the modern world, the Church's progress is snail-paced. The progressives failed to get a new stand on birth control, and asked in vain for the Church to recognize the right of conscientious objection in wartime. Most disappointing was the debate on nuclear weapons, when Bishop Hannan of Washington pleaded against their condemnation, especially when "small" and "clean." An Oriental Patriarch, Maximos IV, in opposing use of the atom bomb, asked the Council to imitate St. Ambrose, who barred the Emperor Theodosius from his Cathedral for having ordered the massacre of an innocent population. The Council resisted such romantic pleas. *Le Monde's* correspondent noted (Nov. 12) that after debating minor liturgical questions endlessly the Council disposed in less than 48 hours "of this most agonizing question for the whole of mankind"—by postponing action. Those prelates of the Church who believe even these horrible weapons may be used in a "just war" are not however alone. Except for a handful of pure pacifists, this is a doctrine on which all mankind, from Rome to Peking, seems to be achieving a unique and miraculous near-unanimity.

Pius XII's Fear of Hitler

The latest volume of German Foreign Office documents simultaneously released by the State Department and the British Foreign Office covers the 6 months from Hitler's attack on Russia to the end of 1941. One document (No. 309) made headlines. In it the German Embassy in Rome reported, "In his heart, one is assured time and again, Pius XII stands on the side of the Axis powers." The news stories did not mention that the same report added, however, that the Pope was unwilling publicly to take a stand against Russia because he feared "that after the defeat of Bolshevism, the Catholic Church, and indeed all Christianity, would, so to speak, go from the frying pan into the fire." The Italian Ambassador in Document No. 330 said Pius XII complained that "Germany was the first in making every effort to get along with Bolshevism, not the Holy See," a reference to the Hitler-Stalin pact. "If I should talk of Bolshevism," the Pope asked him, "should I then say nothing about Nazism?" The Pope deplored "that parody of Our Father" in which German children were taught to "thank Hitler for their daily bread" and said he had been "told long ago" that if Hitler won, he would "do away with the Vatican, because there was no place for it in the new European order."

We'll Send A Free Sample Copy Of This Issue To Friends If You Send Stamped Self-Addressed Envelopes

I. F. Stone's Weekly 5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W. Washington, D. C. 20015

Please renew (or enter) a sub for the enclosed $5:

Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

11/30/64

For the enclosed $5 send a gift sub to:

(To) Name .....

Street .....

City .....**Zone**.....**State**.....

For $5.35 extra send I. F. Stone's *The Haunted Fifties*

I. F. Stone's Weekly
5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

Second class postage paid at Washington, D. C.

NEWSPAPER

I. F. Stone's Weekly. Second Class Postage Paid at Washington, D. C. Published every Monday except the last week in December and the first week in January and Bi-Weekly during July and August at 5618 Nebraska Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. An independent weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: $5 in the U.S.; $6 in Canada; $10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: $15 to Europe; $20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED